

Application No. 08/650,709

Reply to Office Action of September 17, 2003

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-27 (Cancelled)

Claim 28 (Previously Presented): A device for processing hydrous polymer gel of variable thickness, comprising:

a first cutting roll having at least one axially extending cross cutting element including a cutting edge; and

a back-up roll spaced from said cutting roll so as to form a nip,

said first cutting roll being mounted above the longitudinal axis of said back-up roll such that a smallest distance between said cutting edge of the at least one cross cutting element and said back-up roll is situated below[[,]] and upstream [[in]] of a crown of the back-up roll with respect to a conveying direction of a layer of hydrous polymer gel to be cut at the nip, with respect to a crown of the back-up roll, whereby said at least one cutting edge cooperates with said back-up roll to cut the layer of hydrous polymer gel at the nip.

Claim 29 (Previously Presented): A device of claim 28, wherein said first cutting roll has at least one circumferentially extending cutting element including a cutting edge.

Claim 30 (Cancelled)

Claim 31 (New): A device for processing hydrous polymer gel of variable thickness, comprising:

a first cutting roll having at least one axially extending cross cutting element including a cutting edge;

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a back-up roll spaced from said cutting roll so as to form a nip;

said first cutting roll being mounted above the longitudinal axis of said back-up roll such that a smallest distance between said cutting edge of the at least one cross cutting element and said back-up roll is situated below and upstream of a crown of the back-up roll with respect to a conveying direction of a layer of hydrous polymer gel to be cut at the nip; and

U a conveyor positioned and arranged to convey a layer of hydrous polymer gel to the nip as a substantially planar sheet, wherein said at least one cutting edge extends the width of the layer of hydrous polymer gel so that said at least one cutting edge cooperates with said back-up roll to cut the layer of hydrous polymer gel at the nip.

Claim 32 (New): A device of claim 30, wherein said first cutting roll has at least one circumferentially extending cutting element including a cutting edge.